

DAKOTA PACK

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD • SPRING 2013

SDNG APPOINTS TWO NEW TOP ENLISTED LEADERS

Chief Master Sgt. Welch appointed to
new Senior Enlisted Leader position



» TRAINING

Combat medics undergo
refresher training

» SERVICE & SACRIFICE


Three units deploy,
one returns home

» ACHIEVEMENT

Army & Air Guard NCOs, Soldier
and Airmen of the Year announced



Shoe appointed as Army Guard's first
female state command sergeant major

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved top, is sitting on a tan couch. She is holding a wooden-framed black and white photograph of a man in a military uniform, who is wearing glasses and looking down at something in his hands. The background is a blurred interior with bookshelves.

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Submissions: Print and photo submissions of general interest to members of the SDNG, their families, civilian employees, veterans and retirees are invited and encouraged. Please send article and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil, 605.737.6721. Submissions are subject to editing. Electronic submissions are preferred and digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.

DAKOTA PACK

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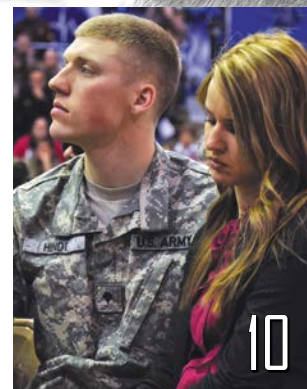
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(Photo illustration by Maj. Anthony Deiss)

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Message from the Adjutant General

I want to start out by congratulating State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman on the occasion of his retirement from the South Dakota National Guard. He performed brilliantly as the ranking enlisted Soldier for the last four years and will be sorely missed, but he will continue to support many of our personnel as Cabinet Secretary of the S.D.

Department of Veterans Affairs. I wish him and Dyann the very best as they begin this next chapter in their lives.

With the retirement of Command Sgt. Maj. Zimmerman, I had the opportunity to follow the trend that has been spreading across the United States by opening up a full-time AGR position with the title of "senior enlisted leader" to the E-9s in both the Air and Army Guard. I selected Chief Master Sgt. Jim Welch from a star-studded list of finalists produced by a blue ribbon interview panel that included both of my assistant adjutants general, the incumbent state command sergeant major, a retired state command sergeant major and a retired state command chief master sergeant. Chief Welch served on active duty for several years in the Air Force before serving briefly in the S.D. Army National Guard and eventually settling in the S.D. Air Guard. His background makes him uniquely qualified to serve as my senior enlisted advisor and I look forward to working with him in this new capacity.

After an Air Guardsman was selected to serve as senior enlisted leader, the Army Guard would be required to select an M-day Soldier to serve as state command sergeant major. Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe was selected to fill that position, which is great news for the Army Guard. I had the opportunity to work with Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe several years back when I was the 109th Group commander and she impressed me as one of the most competent Soldiers with whom I had ever served. There is no question in my mind that she will excel in this important role.

I also want to congratulate Maj. Gen. Ray Carpenter (Ret.) and Maj. Gen. Steve Doohen (Ret.) as the 2013 recipients of the Williamson Militiaman Award. Their noteworthy contributions to the South Dakota National Guard spanned decades and both of them have had a truly significant impact on our great organization.

As I type these words, there is great uncertainty about how the Department of Defense will be impacted by budget negotiations in Congress. The Army, Air Force and National Guard Bureau have issued guidance and direction to prepare for what

many believe will be additional cuts above and beyond the \$487 billion already levied by the Budget Control Act.

The South Dakota National Guard has built a rock-solid reputation of reliability over the course of the last 151 years. Our current strength authorizations on both the Air and Army sides are a good fit for South Dakota's population base, and we must continue to actively recruit, retain and focus on readiness in order to defend our great organization from force structure cuts. I strongly believe that cuts to Guard and Reserve force structure should be the last thing under consideration right now because reserve component units cost a third as much as similar units in the active component. Regardless of what the final decision will be, the South Dakota National Guard will continue to perform with great distinction in the years ahead.

The February mobilizations of the 235th Military Police Company and the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment together with the mobilization of the 152nd CSSB and elements of the 114th Fighter Wing this summer will push our deployed numbers back up to more than 400. I ask you all to keep these deployed Soldiers and Airmen and their families in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch
The Adjutant General

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Message from the new Senior Enlisted Leader

On Jan. 1, 2013, I began my three-year tour as the first Senior Enlisted Leader for the South Dakota National Guard. The Senior Enlisted Leader is responsible for advising the adjutant general on all Soldier and Airmen enlisted issues. I will participate fully in staff meetings, mobilization meetings, diversity and safety councils,

enlistment waivers and discharge packets, qualitative retention boards, mobilizations/demobilizations and other areas that impact enlisted personnel.

My best wishes to outgoing State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman. Larry, thanks for your friendship, leadership, tireless efforts and steadfast dedication to the National Guard and this nation.

You have left the South Dakota National Guard a better place.

Congratulations to the first female State Command Sgt. Maj., Susan Shoe. She is a strong leader with a variety of professional experiences. She is highly knowledgeable about the military mission and has a commitment to the Soldiers and families. I'm looking forward to working with Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe.

Truly, it is an honor and very humbling to be selected as the first Senior Enlisted Leader for the South Dakota National Guard, and I look forward to the challenges that face us. My dedication to you, the Soldiers and Airmen, is being your voice as we continue to face these struggles and challenges in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Chief Master Sgt. James Welch
Senior Enlisted Leader



Message from the new State Command Sergeant Major

I look forward to serving as your Army State Command Sergeant Major as we transition from an Army of execution to an Army of preparation. My goals are to capitalize on new and exciting training opportunities in order to develop leaders at all levels to reach their highest potential in order to mentor those who want to fulfill their goals.

First, I would like to personally recognize Sgt. 1st Class Chad Brooks and Sgt. 1st Class John McGruder, who spent five long weeks away from their families and employers in order to complete their NCOES at the 88M Senior Leader Course at Fort Eustis, Va., to fulfill their obligation as E-7s. It takes a lot of personal time to be a successful "part time" Soldier, so it is great to see two Soldiers with desire, determination and focus on leader development. Their personal sacrifices have set the example for others to follow. I want to personally thank you for all you do as you continue to make the SDNG a great organization.

Currently, we are unsure of what future funding will be available for the military. I ask you to stay focused on how to constantly and continually remain relevant for your fellow Soldiers and units. The drawdown of personnel numbers has affected many realms of the military, so we need to lean forward and look at rebalancing leader development to include Structured Self-Development, NCOES, as well as APFT and height/weight standards. Effective Oct. 1, 2012, passing the APFT and meeting height/weight standards are NCOES course graduation requirements, and schoolhouses are grading to the Army standard.

As a result of these and other changes, I challenge all of you to get involved with your unit's quarterly Best Warrior Competitions, and push each other to reach your full potential, goals and leadership capabilities. South Dakota is hosting the regional Best Warrior Competition next year, in which Soldiers and NCOs from eight states will compete. The winners from this year's state competition in September will represent South Dakota next year here in our own state. What an excellent opportunity to prove to yourself what you are made of!

Staying relevant means focusing on processes to remain vigilant, which helps our voices to be heard. Get involved with your officer and enlisted associations. South Dakota is hosting the national enlisted conference in Sioux Falls from Aug. 18-21, 2013. I encourage you to understand what the SDNG associations do for you, and get involved in order to make a difference. Some of the benefits these associations have helped us secure are: the ability to split train, TriCare, G.I. Bills, VA Loans, pay raises, bonuses, etc. The more voices we have, the more change we can make. If you are not a member of the enlisted or officer associations, you are doing yourself, your Soldiers and your families a disservice.

I expect you to share your thoughts and ideas with me as I visit units throughout the state, and always know I have your best interests at heart. Again, my highest congratulations to these two outstanding Soldiers for leading the way!

Sincerely,

Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe
State Command Sergeant Major

Sioux Falls, Flandreau Guard unit to deploy to Afghanistan

SIoux FALLS - The South Dakota Army National Guard's 1742nd Transportation Company has received an alert order for possible mobilization to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 1742nd and its 169 assigned members are scheduled for deployment in the December 2013/January 2014 time frame. The unit's headquarters is located in Sioux Falls and its Detachment 1 in Flandreau.

The mission of the 1742nd is to provide transportation of both dry and refrigerated containerized cargo, general non-containerized cargo and bulk water and fuel products.

The unit will report to Fort Hood, Texas, to complete several weeks of theater-specific training prior to deployment overseas.

This will be the third mobilization for the 1742nd, which deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003-2004 and in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1990-1991.

Rapid City Fire Department honored with Patriot Award

RAPID CITY - The South Dakota Army National Guard awarded the Rapid City Fire Department the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award, Dec. 3, during the City Council meeting.

The ESGR Patriot Award recognizes supervisors and bosses nominated by a Guardsman or Reservist employee for support provided directly to the nominator.

Capt. Edward Cromwell has worked full-time at the Rapid City Fire Department since November 2005. He nominated his boss, Chief Mike Maltaverne, for support during Cromwell's 19-month deployment overseas from October 2008-April 2010.

"Chief Maltaverne and the fire department were super supportive," said Cromwell. "Some of the guys at the department sent care packages and communicated with me on a regular basis. Being a deployed Soldier can be tough and it's nice to know that I was guaranteed a job once I came home."

The award reflects the efforts made to support service members through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence, if needed.

Counterdrug Program receives national Power of Partners Award

WASHINGTON - The South Dakota National Guard Counterdrug Program's Civil Operations Team was awarded the National Power of Partners Award at the Army and Navy Club in Washington, D.C., Feb. 6.

The award recognizes organizations and community groups for their efforts to create a "drug-free" message by working together with other agencies toward a common goal.

The Civil Operations Team actively participates in community-based programs and projects by providing educational outreach to students throughout the state. They also support other events as well, such as flyovers of local schools to photograph their students' Red Ribbon Week gatherings and supporting other groups that strive to improve the community.

"I was shocked when the National Family Partnership called. This award shows that the fruits of what we do are seen even beyond our local community," said Palmer "It shows the success and power of the local Red Ribbon Campaign as a whole."

However, national recognition is not new to the SDNG Counterdrug Program. Just last year, the program received the 2012 Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award during a Department of Defense Red Ribbon ceremony at the Hall of Heroes in the Pentagon. The award recognized them as one of the best Drug Demand Reduction programs in the military for its effort in promoting its support of outreach and prevention programs within its communities.

"I am extremely proud of our Counterdrug program for being selected for this award," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "Their hard work and high standards serve as an example to us all."

Daktronics awarded Pro Patria

PIERRE - The South Dakota Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (SD ESGR) presented its prestigious 2012 Pro Patria Award to Daktronics, of Brookings, Feb. 7, during the SDNG's annual Legislative Dining-Out ceremony in Pierre at the Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center.

The Pro Patria Award is presented to the one employer in the state who provides the most exceptional support of our national defense through leadership practices and personnel policies that support their employees

who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

"Employers are inextricably linked to the nation's defense by sharing their most precious assets, their employees," said Capt. Lona Christensen, SD ESGR executive director, during the award presentation. "Daktronics is being recognized for their outstanding contributions to the state and nation's military services."

Daktronics is a manufacturer and technical contractor that provides electronic display products and custom-designed and integrated systems. Daktronics employs more than 2,500 people, including 1st Lt. Cody Becker, a production supervisor and member of Battery A, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion in Aberdeen. Becker nominated Daktronics for their support of military members.

The employer has formalized a military leave recognition policy, which provides for care packages and cards to not only the deployed service members, but to the families as well. Daktronics is proud of their employee's military service and highlights current and past veterans in their publications. All employees returning home from deployment receive a welcome back card from the Daktronics' president.

"Daktronics' philosophy has always been to be very supportive of the military," said Morgan. "Al Kurtenbach, chairman of the board and Daktronics cofounder, and I both served in the military, and I am pleased that the National Guard recognizes that we are very supportive of their service to the state and country."

Guard members deliver holiday gifts to the state Veterans Home

HOT SPRINGS - The South Dakota National Guard delivered holiday gifts to veterans during the annual Christmas party at the South Dakota Veterans Home in Hot Springs, Dec. 15. Members of the SDNG have attended the party for more than 15 years to help bring Christmas cheer to more than 100 residents.

"Before the scheduled party, the residents fill out a wish list," said Barb Beery, State Veterans Home secretary. "They look forward to this event with a lot of anticipation."

This year, the National Guard had approximately 27 people, dressed in Santa hats, distribute gifts to the residents.

Among the holiday chaos of singing, eating and unwrapping Christmas presents, a presentation took place to recognize two

volunteers who spend their time making the lives of service members, families and veterans better.

Gloria Doochen and LuAnne Johnson were presented with the Outstanding Civilian Service Award for exceptional meritorious service to the Soldiers, Airmen, families of the South Dakota National Guard and South Dakota veterans. During the presentation, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch expressed his appreciation for their service.

"Your faithful and selfless service to the military community is a true inspiration for others to emulate," he said. "The countless hours that you gave in service to others clearly demonstrates your belief of service above self, and our organization and veterans are better off because of your dedicated service and support."

842nd Family Readiness Group receives national award

WASHINGTON - Sept. 27, 2011, was the day members of the 842nd Engineer Company were called to deploy. The Soldiers would start their yearlong journey in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, leaving hundreds of family members, friends and community members behind.

However, loved ones were not in fact left behind as the 842nd Family Readiness Group stepped in to help those temporarily without their loved ones. Volunteers quickly kicked off the program so families could participate in activities and different events that would take place throughout the year.

For the exceptional efforts of the program, the 842nd FRG received the 2012 Department of Defense Reserve Family Readiness Award for the National Guard, March 1, at the Pentagon Hall of Heroes in Washington, D.C. Representatives received a commemorative plaque and framed certificate, along with a cash award from the Military Officers Association of America, which is to be used to further enhance the unit's family support programs.

The RFRA recognizes one National Guard and Reserve unit from each of the seven Reserve components with the best programs to support their families. The program was established in 2000 to recognize the top unit Family Readiness program in each Reserve component that demonstrated outstanding family readiness while maintaining superior mission readiness.



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Twenty-ninth annual SDNG Legislative Dining-Out

SDNG Public Affairs Office

PIERRE – The South Dakota National Guard hosted the 2013 Legislative Dining-Out in Pierre Feb. 7. This annual event has brought Guardsmen and the state Legislature together for a formal evening for the last 29 years. The event highlights the organization's traditions, past events and recognizes individual achievements. In addition to the many SDNG accomplishments, the Guard also recognized a family, employer and public servant for their contributions to the Guard's mission.

The awards portion of the dining-out began by presenting Daktronics with the 2012 South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Pro Patria Award. The Pro Patria Award is presented to the one employer in the state who provides the most exceptional support of our national defense through leadership practices and personnel policies that support their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. Daktronics is a manufacturer and technical contractor that provides electronic display products and custom-designed and integrated systems. Located in Brookings, Daktronics employs more than 2,500 people, including 1st Lt. Cody Becker, of Battery A, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion in Aberdeen.

The SDNG next awarded the 2013 Williamson Militiaman Award to Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter (retired), former acting director of the Army National Guard, and Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen (retired), former adjutant general of the SDNG. The Williamson Militiaman Award was established in 1987 by Maj. Gen. Ronald F. Williamson (retired) to recognize an individual who exemplifies the spirit of the citizen-Soldier as shown by their community leadership, their support of the National Guard and the defense of our country.

Maj. Gen. Carpenter commanded at all levels in the SD Army Guard; commanding both the 109th Engineer Battalion and 109th Group. He also served in key, senior-leadership positions as the chief of staff and the assistant adjutant general for the Army Guard, where he was engaged in the initial years of what would be the largest mobilization of the SDNG since World War II. Carpenter went on to serve as special assistant to the director of the Army National Guard in Washington, D.C., and was later appointed as the acting director of the Army National Guard, where he served for two and a half years before retiring with 44 years of service.

Maj. Gen. Doohen held numerous positions throughout his career in the SD Air Guard to include commander of the 175th Tactical Fighter Group and commander of the 114th Fighter Wing. He later went on to serve as the assistant adjutant general for the Air Guard, and was later appointed as the SDNG's 20th adjutant general in 2007. As the adjutant general, he guided the preparation of 4,400 Guardsmen and 950 full-time federal and state employees. He retired with 40 years of service.

To conclude the awards portion of the evening, the 2013 Adjutant General's Family Award was presented to Chief Master Sgt. Bruce and Faye Lee. This award recognizes those family members who support their service members in an exemplary manner while managing family, careers, or even hardship, all the while not seeking recognition for their sacrifices.

Chief Master Sgt. Bruce Lee is a member of the 114th Operations Group of the SD Air Guard. He and his wife, Faye, have been exceptional supporters of the Air National Guard and the Sioux Falls community. Bruce and Faye have spent countless hours volunteering their time to support local organizations such as The Banquet, the 114th Fighter Wing's Family Volunteer Group, Project Supply Our Students, the Enlisted Association of SD, Young Heroes Program, Junior Achievement, the Mentoring Program, American Cancer Volunteers, March of Dimes and the Sioux Empire Home Builders Association, to name a few.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews

Gov. Dennis Daugaard presents the 2012 SD ESGR Pro Patria Award to Daktronics employees Sgt. 1st Class Barbara Jensen, Jeff Pekas, EA plant manager, 1st Lt. Cody Becker and Jim Morgan, president and CEO.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews

Maj. Gen. Ray Carpenter (ret.) center left above, and Maj. Gen. Steve Doohen (ret.), center left below, are presented with the Williamson Militiaman Award by Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Maj. Gen. Ronald Williamson (ret.), and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews

Chief Master Sgt. Bruce Lee and his wife, Faye, are presented with the 2013 Adjutant General's Family Award by Gov. Dennis Daugaard and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch.

Contracting team activates for deployment

SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY – Family, friends and coworkers joined together at the Duke Corning Armory on Camp Rapid for an activation ceremony for four Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 1978th Contingency Contracting Team, Nov. 28.

Maj. Matthew Symonds, Capt. Paula Moore, Sgt. 1st Class Jack Hahne and Staff Sgt. Amanda Galdo will deploy for a nine-month tour to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Rapid City-based 1978th will plan for and coordinate all contracting functions at a brigade or combat team level.

"We work with contracts that deal with anything from purchasing food to construction projects," said Maj. Matthew Symonds, 1978th commander. "We are here to make sure the military is a good steward of our taxpayers' money."

The unit will be responsible for assisting with the development and administration of contracting support plans, policy and appendices in support of operational, contingency and deliberate plans associated within an area of responsibility.

"We're very excited about the opportunity to apply what we've learned in the past four years," said Symonds. "The South Dakota National Guard has trained us well and has instilled confidence in us to accomplish our mission."

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG, addressed the audience during the activation ceremony.

"Even though this is a small unit, they are a big deal," said Reisch. "We have four members who will be split up into four different areas overseas. Their function is critical in the operations overseas. Without them everything would come to a halt."

The South Dakota National Guard has a rich history of deploying service members in time of need.

"The South Dakota National Guard has been sending people out the door to do missions the state and nation has needed for more than 150 years," said Reisch. "We have developed a tremendous legacy over that century and a half. There is no question in my mind that this unit will continue to enhance the legacy of the South Dakota National Guard."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen

South Dakota Army National Guard's Capt. Paula Moore of the 1978th Contingency Contracting Team hugs her friend, Audrey Montileaux, after the activation ceremony for the unit's deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Nov. 28, at Camp Rapid.



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Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee

Spc. Travis Hindt, of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 235th Military Police Company, holds his wife during the 235th's activation ceremony Feb. 2 at the Stevens High School gymnasium in Rapid City. The Rapid City and Sioux Falls-based unit will deploy to Afghanistan to provide security for U.S. military personnel, installation and facilities and to guard prisoners of war and civilian internees.

235th MP Co. Soldiers deploy for Afghanistan

SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY – Hundreds of family members, friends and co-workers joined together at the Stevens High School gymnasium Feb. 2 for a deployment ceremony for 124 Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 235th Military Police Company.

The Rapid City and Sioux Falls-based 235th will serve a nine-month tour in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The unit's mission is to provide security for U.S. military personnel, installations and facilities and to guard prisoners of war and civilian internees.

This is the third mobilization for the 235th – deploying in support of Operation Noble Eagle in Fort Carson, Colo., in 2003, as well as in support of OEF in Afghanistan in 2006.

"The service the 235th has provided to our state and nation is incredible," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard, during the ceremony. "You've provided support to our state during the 2000 Jasper Fire and 2011 Missouri River Flood, as well as deployed to Fort Carson, Colo., after 9/11 and to Afghanistan in 2006. You deploy again once more and have answered the call of your nation."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee

Sgt. Clyde Linker, of the 235th Military Police Company, holds his daughter, Arianna, during the 235th's activation ceremony Feb. 2 at Stevens High School in Rapid City.

"This is the third time our unit has been called to active duty. Over the last 10 months, you all have worked extremely hard on completing the training put forth in front of you to prepare for this deployment," said 235th Commander, Capt. Thadius Schmit. "This speaks volumes of their commitment and sacrifice to their state and nation."

"The South Dakota National Guard has a rich history of deploying service members in times of need," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG. "The 235th adds to that heritage."

"The Guard has been sending people out the door to do missions the state and nation has needed for 151 years," continued Reisch. "We have a developed a tremendous legacy over that century and a half. There is no question that the 235th will continue to enhance the legacy of our organization."

"You will leave on this deployment as teams, squads and platoons and will return as brothers and sisters and as a family," said Schmit. "I'm not sure what our year ahead is going to look like, but I know we will make our community, state and nation proud."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Beck

Members of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment stand to be recognized during their activation ceremony, Feb. 15, at the Duke Corning Armory in Rapid City. The Rapid City-based unit will deploy to Afghanistan to provide public affairs support, facilitate civilian news media coverage, and assist and advise members of the Afghanistan National Army on public affairs operations.

Public affairs Soldiers bound for Afghanistan

SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY – A deployment ceremony was held for 11 Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Feb. 15 at the Duke Corning Armory on Camp Rapid.

The Rapid City-based 129th will deploy to Afghanistan for a nine-month tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The unit will provide public affairs support, facilitate civilian news media coverage, and assist and advise members of the Afghanistan National Army on public affairs operations.

"Our mission is vital to our nation's strategy there," said Maj. Wayne Asscherick, 129th commander. "Our mission has three separate and equally important parts: to do what we do best, and that is produce public affairs products in the form of print and broadcast stories and photographs; manage the media embed process and coordinate for civilian news media to be able to embed with combat units so they can let the world know what is happening in Afghanistan; teach, coach, assist and advise members of the Afghan National Army on public affairs matters."

Rapid City Mayor Sam Kooiker and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch were featured speakers at the ceremony.

"I want to thank you for putting yourself in harm's way, so that we can be free at home," said Kooiker. "You are going to a place where freedom is not free. Freedom isn't free here either and we can't take it for granted. What you are doing is critical because you are spreading the true message

of what freedom is all about. Thank you very much for your service and for all you do."

"I know today is a very proud day for you," said Reisch. "These activation ceremonies are all too common and we've had many of them in the SDNG. Over and over again, our units have gone over and successfully completed their mission and they've come back and

have added to the 151-year legacy of the South Dakota Guard. There is no question in my mind that this unit will do exactly that."

This is the third mobilization for the 129th – deploying to Fort Riley, Kan. in 2003 and MacDill Air Force Base, Fla./Qatar in 2006 – both in support of OEF.

"I believe it takes a special kind of person to make the decision to become a professional Soldier – someone who will place the needs of their country above the needs of themselves; someone who will dedicate their lives to an idea; someone who will leave their homes and their family and sacrifice some of that precious time they have together," said Asscherick. "The

Soldiers that comprise the 129th MPAD are no exception."

The unit will report to Fort Dix, N.J., and complete several weeks of theater-specific training prior to deploying overseas. Seven additional Soldiers from Oregon, Washington, Maryland, Massachusetts and South Carolina will join the unit when they arrive at Fort Dix.

"I believe it takes a special kind of person to make the decision to become a professional Soldier – someone who will place the needs of their country above the needs of themselves ... the Soldiers that comprise the 129th MPAD are no exception."

**– Maj. Wayne Asscherick –
Commander**



ABOVE: Members of the 114th Security Forces Squadron looked for loved ones in the crowd as they returned home at the Sioux Falls Regional Airport Nov. 7. Twenty-seven members of the 114th SFS returned home after spending six months supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Southwest Asia.

Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland

RIGHT: Tech. Sgt. Jerime Olson, 114th Security Forces Squadron, is welcomed home by his wife and daughter at the Sioux Falls Regional Airport Nov. 7.

114th Security Forces Squadron does what needs to be done

Story by Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIOUX FALLS – The tasks that members of the 114th Security Forces Squadron are responsible for aren't much different no matter what part of the world they are in. They perform a wide spectrum of security, force protection and law enforcement duties for U.S. and allied forces around the world.

Thirty-one members of the unit recently returned from a six-month deployment to an undisclosed operating location in Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

This unit and its members have deployed to do the same thing, at different locations, four times over the past 10 years, and each time has brought new challenges and rewards.

"We are proud to say that when we went through our combat skills training at Eglin Air Force Base before deploying, the cadre that teach the course commented that our NCOs were the best they had ever had go through the course, active duty included," said

Chief Master Sgt. Jeanne Gacke, 114th Security Forces superintendent.

Many of the deploying NCOs fulfilled new roles during this mission. Tech. Sgt. Kris King, Tech. Sgt. Jerime Olson and Tech. Sgt. Steve Pederson were all moved into leadership positions on this deployment. This tested their skills and increased their knowledge base, making them better mentors for the young Airmen. They were mentors not just to 114th Security Forces Squadron members, but also the other Air National Guard members there from Oklahoma, Iowa and Alaska. The squadron was the only all Air National Guard squadron on the base and was led by leaders from the 114th Fighter Wing exclusively.

Such accolades are a testament to the dedication of the unit's members, many of whom have been on all four of the squadron's overseas deployments.

One such member is Tech. Sgt. Paul Lupkes, 114th Security Forces squad leader. Starting in 2002, Sgt. Lupkes deployed as a member of the unit to the same location they returned to in 2012. As a much younger Airman, he remembers doing much the same duties as he did this time around, with one exception.

"I had to become the unit's unofficial barber when the base contract barbers were fired," said Lupkes.

Not a funny situation when a base of more than 1,000 military members, mostly men, need haircuts and no one is around to do it. As a lesson learned from earlier deployments, Lupkes taught himself how to cut hair and as word spread of his talent, his client list grew.

"Even when there was a barber available, it could be a two- to three-hour wait each day to get in. This time we brought our own clippers along, and so we were ready when the contract barbers were fired," stated Lupkes.

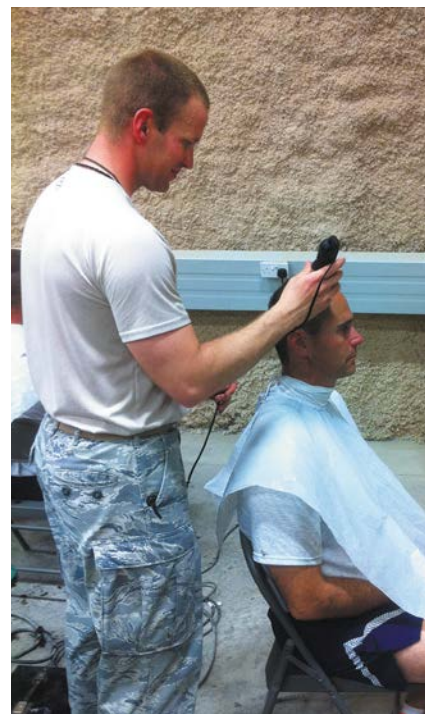
Cutting hair is just one of the ways the NCOs of the 114th Security Forces Squadron show that they are willing to go above and beyond to get the job done. Staying at the top of their game, including in dress and appearance, is paramount for these Airmen.

"I couldn't be prouder of how our Airmen performed," stated Maj. Joseph Hardin, 114th Security Forces Squadron commander and Defense Forces commander for this deployment. "Whether in South Dakota or somewhere else in the world, our unit lives by the words proud, prepared and professional - anytime, anywhere. My men and women just proved that once again."



Courtesy Photo

Maj. Joseph Hardin, 114th Security Forces Squadron commander, takes time to check in with Senior Airman Bodray Jans, 114th Security Forces Squadron team member, while he is on patrol during the unit's deployment in 2012.



Courtesy Photo

Tech. Sgt. Paul Lupkes, 114th Security Forces squadron leader, "takes a little off the top" for Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Marino in October 2012 while serving as the squadron's barber during their deployment.

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Training to survive

Story by Senior Airman Amanda Bradshaw

114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIoux FALLS – Air Force Staff Sgt. Bo Martz, 175th Fighter Squadron aircrew flight equipment journeyman, became the one to listen to as he led pilots of the South Dakota Air National Guard through Combat Survival Training here, Jan. 6.

This Combat Survival Training is a mix of hands-on training and instructional briefings, much of which is held outside in the frigid South Dakota winter. The purpose of this training is to give pilots the skills and knowledge needed to return home with honor if they are ever shot down. They focus on how to overcome physical and psychological stress.

The course is based on the Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape training that all of the aircrew flight equipment personnel in the unit go through at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash. This type of instructional training duty is one of the behind-the-scenes tasks that aircrew flight equipment personnel perform.

“All of the techniques that we instruct are essential means of surviving adverse situations,” said Staff Sgt. Martz.

“If any of our pilots find themselves in a survival situation, whether it is behind enemy lines or not, we teach them to never lose sight that as Air Force members, our guys are out there, always trying to find them. Their job is basically to just stay put, keep their mind right and realize that help is on the way,” Martz concluded.

The course can be summarized by saying that if one can maintain a positive attitude, take care of yourself and not focus on the negative, you can survive.

Out with the old and in with the new

Story by Master Sgt. Christopher Stewart

114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIoux FALLS – Members of the 114th Fighter Wing took time out of a busy training day to exchange outdated chemical warfare masks for new ones at Joe Foss Field, Jan. 11.

Members of the unit are exchanging their old MCU-2 series gas masks for the new M-50 Joint Service General Purpose Gas Mask. The new M-50 mask brings with it a list of improvements over its predecessor.

The most noticeable difference between the M-50 and its predecessor is the addition of the twin conformal filter system. According to Tech. Sgt. Brian Lebrun, 114th Fighter Wing Emergency Management technician, the second filter allows for ease of filter replacement in a contaminated environment as well as a 5 percent improvement in breathing resistance.

“This system is designed with all the improvements we’ve needed since the old M-17 series masks...the years of research have paid off,” said Senior Master Sgt. Rick Larson, 114th Fighter Wing Emergency Management superintendent.

The M-50 also boasts an improved drinking system that swivels out of the user’s way when not in use.



Photo by Senior Airman Amanda Bradshaw

Staff Sgt. Bo Martz, 175th Fighter Squadron Aircrew Flight Equipment technician, kneels in the snow with a parachute while instructing the Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape refresher training during Combat Survival Training near Joe Foss Field Jan. 6.



Photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Stewart

Members of the South Dakota Air National Guard help wingmen adjust their new gas masks to attain a proper seal during training for their new M-50 Joint Services General Purpose Gas Mask Jan. 6.

Airmen are excited about the improved comfort and fit of the new M-50.

“I will be able to breathe and talk normally when wearing the mask, not through clenched teeth like I had to with the old one,” said Senior Airman Daniel Jamison, 114th Maintenance Squadron crew chief.

The M-50 is being issued to all branches of the service, and will replace all currently used gas masks.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Danny Oaks of the 82nd Civil Support Team searches for hazardous materials during an emergency response training exercise at the Sanford Underground Research Facility at the Homestake Mine in Lead Nov. 15.

Guard hazmat team trains at Homestake Mine

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
SDNG Public Affairs Office

LEAD – The South Dakota National Guard's 82nd Civil Support Team paired up with personnel from the Sanford Underground Research Facility to conduct an emergency response training exercise at the Homestake Mine, Nov. 15.

South Dakota's all-hazard response team and Sanford's emergency response team used the exercise as an opportunity to train together to respond to the release of chemical, biological or radioactive agents. The exercise was designed around a scenario in which Sanford's emergency response personnel noticed an unidentified, disturbing odor coming from the education and research building. Suspecting it could be a type of hazardous material, the team notified law enforcement officials of the potential threat, who then contacted the 82nd based at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

The 82nd CST dispatched their rapid response package, which includes 10 personnel and equipment, transported via two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

"The point of this exercise is to use our rapid response package, which sends a small team ahead of the rest of us," said Sgt. 1st Class Alex Raber, communications noncommissioned officer for the 82nd. "They can get here and have an idea of what we are dealing with before the rest of our assets are



82nd Civil Support Team members unload equipment from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a training exercise the Sanford Underground Research Facility at the Homestake Mine in Lead Nov. 15.

on site. This type of response can be used for missions that are in hard to reach areas that are not easy to access with our vehicles."

The chances of the CST being called to respond to an incident at the Sanford Underground Research Facility is low, but may become more likely as the site becomes known around the world. The National Science Foundation selected the Homestake Mine as the preferred site for a proposed national Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory in 2007.

"Our overall mission here is to provide

beneficial space for science," said Tom Regan, Sanford environmental health and safety support specialist. "We see this becoming more of an educational and outreach campus in support of science.

"This is great for our team to learn from the 82nd CST. With their expertise, it gives us a sense of security in knowing they are nearby ready to help if needed," continued Regan. "We also appreciate the opportunity to host the South Dakota National Guard by giving them a place to train in a different environment."

Outstanding Soldier, NCO of the Year



SDARNG Soldier of the Year – Spc. James Furry
730th Area Support Medical Company



SDARNG NCO of the Year – Sgt. Jacob Vissia
211th Engineer Company (Sapper)

Story by 2nd Lt. Chad Carlson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

The South Dakota Army National Guard named Sgt. Jacob Vissia, of Harrisburg, the 2012 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and Spc. James Furry, of Sioux Falls, the 2012 Soldier of the Year, Oct. 14, at the Duke Corning Armory on Camp Rapid.

Each award is the top honor for both the noncommissioned officer and enlisted corps within the state's Army National Guard.

Vissia and Furry have advanced through company, battalion, brigade and state-level competitions and will next represent the South Dakota Army National Guard at the Region 6 Best Warrior Competition held in Oregon in May, where they will compete against Soldiers selected from seven other states.

"It is a combination of excitement and relief to be done with the competition," Vissia said. "The competition challenges us all physically, emotionally and mentally."

"The competition with the other Soldiers pushed me to work harder," said Furry. "It was fierce. I am tired and happy to get

this far. I hope to represent the state well at the next level of competition. My hat is off to the other competitors. The competition was strong, organized well and definitely challenged us."

Vissia and Furry will again face fierce competition in events they've seen before such as an interview board, a land navigation course, an obstacle course, a weapons qualification test and a physical fitness test and will see new events added at the regional level of the competition.

"There is a certain amount of relief that comes with the end of this competition, but I am proud to have the opportunity to represent the state at this regional event," said Furry. "I am going to try to have fun with it."

NCO OF THE YEAR

Vissia, a combat engineer in the 211th Engineer Company (Sapper), Madison, joined the National Guard in March 2006.

"I wanted to be in the Army ever since I was a little kid," said Vissia.

He not only enlisted into the South Dakota Army National Guard, but three years later would deploy to Afghanistan for one year, where his unit's primary mission would be route clearance.

On the civilian side of life, Vissia lives in Harrisburg, where he is the restaurant and bar owner of the Fish Lake Country Club.

He said he attributes his success in preparing for the competitions to his unit's Sapper school train-up program.

"I'm proud to have made it this far," Vissia said. "I work hard to do well in this type of competition and don't like to lose. I am appreciative of the opportunity to represent my unit and look forward to the next step."

While Vissia will continue working hard preparing for the regional competition, he said his long-term goals with the South Dakota National Guard are to make it a full-time career.

"I plan on retiring with 20-plus years in the National Guard," said Vissia. "I would love to find a full-time position with the Guard. My next big career goal is finding that full-time position."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

Furry, a health care specialist in the 730th Area Support Medical Company, Vermillion, joined the National Guard in July 2009.

"My older brother had been in the Guard for some time and enjoyed it," said Furry. "After meeting my recruiter and discussing the many benefits and options the Guard offers such as Physician Assistant School – I was sold."

Furry works at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls in the Vascular Interventional Radiology Department. He lives in Sioux Falls

with his wife, Brenna, and their four children, Sydney, 14, Sierra, 12, Jacob, 8, and Caleb, 4.

"I have been working on going to PA school through the Interservice Physician Assistant Program," Furry said. "Becoming a PA has been a focus of mine ever since college and I hope to see that through."

Hard work and staying focused on the task at hand are the things that Furry said have advanced him this far in the Soldier of the Year Competition.

"I was up against very tough competition in Spc. Koupal," Furry said. "He actually won

all the physical events with relative ease. I had to maintain a short memory so I could forget about the last event and focus on the next one. That kind of neck-and-neck competition made me work even harder."

Furry said making it to the regional competition is a big deal for him personally.

"It shows me that I can keep pace with some of the best Soldiers around," said Furry. "I hope I continue to show my family and my unit that I deserve to be here. I couldn't have made it this far without their support and help in preparing for this competition."

Outstanding Airmen of the Year



The 114th Fighter Wing announced its outstanding Airmen of the Year during a ceremony at Joe Foss Field, Nov. 4. The South Dakota Air National Guard Outstanding Airmen of the Year are (left to right), NCO of the Year, Tech. Sgt. Thomas Tomko, 114th Security Forces Squadron; Senior NCO of the Year, Senior Master Sgt. James Volden, 114th Civil Engineer Squadron; and Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Jared Mengenhausen, 114th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

The 114th Fighter Wing selected the Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 2012. This year's group of candidates included 17 of the best that the unit has, and the selection was very difficult.

The Outstanding Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year is Senior Master Sgt. James Volden, 114th Civil Engineer Squadron. Volden is a full-time technician as the unit's Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force Manager and has more than 25 years of service.

The Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

is Tech. Sgt. Thomas Tomko, 114th Security Forces Squadron. Tomko is a traditional member of the unit and serves as a fire-team leader and has more than 18 years of service.

The Outstanding Airman of the Year is Senior Airman Jared Mengenhausen, 114th Logistics Readiness Squadron. Mengenhausen is a traditional member of the unit and serves as a special purpose motor vehicle mechanic and has more than four years of service.

These outstanding Airmen will move on to be submitted for the Air National Guard Outstanding Airman program where they will compete for the overall Air National Guard award.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee

SD National Guard appoints two new top enlisted leaders

Air Guard's Chief Master Sgt. Welch appointed to new Senior Enlisted Leader position

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Beck
SDNG Public Affairs Office

South Dakota Air National Guard Chief Master Sgt. James Welch, of Sioux Falls, is the state's first senior enlisted leader for the South Dakota National Guard. Welch is the first noncommissioned officer from either the South Dakota Army or Air National Guard to be named to the new position.

Welch was appointed to the position Feb. 2 at Camp Rapid. Welch will serve as an advisor to the state's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, on all enlisted matters concerning the Guard's 4,300 Soldiers and Airmen, including health, morale, welfare and readiness.

"My duties and responsibilities are to provide leadership for the total enlisted force of the South Dakota National Guard, both Army and Air," said Welch. "Whether this position is held by an Air or Army National Guardsman should not matter. It comes down to taking care of our Soldiers and Airmen, doing the right things and leading by example."

Prior to the position of senior enlisted leader, Welch served as the noncommissioned officer in charge of operations for the 114th Civil Engineer Squadron, the 114th Fighter Wing command chief and state command chief for the South Dakota Air National Guard.

"Chief Master Sgt. Welch has a long record of exemplary service, which includes time in the regular Air Force, the South Dakota Army National Guard and the South Dakota Air National Guard," said Maj.

Gen. Reisch. "He is exceptionally well prepared to perform the duties and responsibilities of this position, and I look forward to working with him in this new capacity."

Welch said one of his priorities is to ensure the best for the Soldiers and Airmen working in the SDNG.

"With the cost cutting measures taking place, it's high on my list to make sure that our Soldiers and Airmen do not lose the level of readiness and training they presently have," said Welch. "They need to be mission capable and support the war fight, as well as support South Dakota."

Welch enlisted in the Air Force in 1975 as a cable splicing specialist and was stationed at Griffis Air Force Base, N.Y. He obtained the rank of buck sergeant (E-4) and was honorably discharged in 1979. In 1981, he enlisted in the South Dakota Army National Guard as a 12B (engineer) and obtained the rank of sergeant (E-5).

In October 1982, Welch transferred to the South Dakota Air National Guard as a refrigeration and air-conditioning technician. By January 2000, he rose to the position of noncommissioned officer in charge of operations in the 114th Civil Engineer Squadron, and later assumed the 114th Fighter Wing command chief position in October 2006. He served as the state command chief for the SDANG since March 2010.



Shoe appointed as Army Guard's first female state command sergeant major

Story by 2nd Lt. Rebecca Linder
SDNG Public Affairs Office

Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee

The South Dakota Army National Guard appointed its first female to the highest ranking senior enlisted position in the state during a change of responsibility ceremony Feb. 2. Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe replaces State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman as the new state command sergeant major, the highest ranking noncommissioned officer position for the South Dakota Army National Guard.

Shoe becomes the first female to serve in the position, as well as the eighth state command sergeant major, since the position was first established in the state in 1975. In this role, Shoe will serve as the assistant adjutant general's personal advisor on all enlisted matters for the Army Guard.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe was selected for this position from five of our top senior NCO applicants from within the Army National Guard," said Brig. Gen. Craig Johnson, assistant adjutant general of the SDARNG, during the ceremony. "Her personal qualifications, leadership ability, competency and can-do attitude distinguished her as the right person, at the right time, to lead our NCO Corps."

"This selection means a great deal to me, and I am honored to have been selected as the first female command sergeant major for South Dakota," said Shoe. "I have so much pride for the coyote patch on our left sleeve, and I will champion its history and its future for those past and present and all this patch represents."

"Command Sgt. Maj. Zimmerman and I have worked together off and on for many, many years," said Shoe. "This time around, Zimmerman has provided me with the transitional advice, knowledge and guidance to begin my tenure as the new state command sergeant major."

Zimmerman served as the state command sergeant major since 2009, and retires with nearly 30 years of military service – 26 of which were in the National Guard. Zimmerman was recently appointed as the first

Secretary of Veterans Affairs in Gov. Dennis Daugaard's cabinet, where he will manage the Department of Veterans Affairs and its programs.

"My favorite part about being in this position was taking care of Soldiers' needs and seeing great service members working together," said Zimmerman. "During my time as state command sergeant major, I got to rebuild the Enlisted Promotion System, bring Soldiers and Airmen together, getting to know each other during the 2011 Missouri River flood, and I also got the opportunity to take two trips to Afghanistan and Iraq to visit Soldiers and Airmen and see them do their thing."

Shoe, who has more than 23 years of military service, 16 of those as a member of the SDARNG, will also continue her full-time duties as the senior logistics NCO for Joint Force Headquarters.

Shoe will be responsible for assisting and advising Brig. Gen. Johnson, as well as advising the state's new senior enlisted advisor, Chief Master Sgt. James Welch, on all Soldier issues that affect the enlisted and NCO Corps within the nearly 3,300 members of the Army Guard.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe is very well prepared to complete this challenging assignment and it's great to have someone with her depth and breadth of experience leading our NCO Corps," said Johnson. "I know she will be relied upon heavily by me and our senior leadership as we move forward in this great organization."

Shoe will also observe unit training in all 24 SDARNG communities, attend mobilization/de-mobilization events and ensure Soldier morale and well-being.

"Maintaining a cohesive and a relevant force, as well as ensuring clear and concise communication are enhanced will be the priorities of the adjutant general, assistant adjutant general and myself," said Shoe. "Brig. Gen. Johnson and I believe that solutions come from the field. We will be working together in order to find appropriate solutions to the difficulties endured by South Dakota's finest."



Combat medics undergo refresher course to hone skills

Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Rebecca Linder
SDNG Public Affairs Office

Twenty-four South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers completed a combat medic refresher course hosted by the 2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) in Sioux Falls, Jan. 11. During the course, Soldiers refreshed their medical skill sets and learned new treatments, tactics, techniques and procedures used both on and off the battlefield.

The 48-hour course, taught by Soldiers of the 196th and several contractors of Computer Sciences Corporation from the Regional Training Site Medical, of Fort McCoy, Wis., also allowed the combat medics to refresh their Emergency Medical Technician licenses.

Each combat medic is required to have 72 hours of education every two years and is also required to maintain their EMT license. If Soldiers fail to maintain their license, they lose their title as a combat medic.

"This is unique training, and we are really focusing on two different skill sets – both civilian and military," said Aaron Simpson, an instructor for the course and a member of the Minnesota Army National Guard. "I got in the National Guard in 1990 and once I came out of my initial training, we didn't get any sustainment training. Therefore, if we ever had to apply our training in real life, I don't think I would have felt as confident as a medic who just received this training."

Not only was there instructional training during the course, but

ABOVE: Army National Guard Soldiers, Spc. Josh Gripentrog, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion, and Spc. Pence Upchurch, 211th Engineer Company, provide care to a simulated casualty while Mike Taylor, an instructor from the Regional Training Site Medical of Fort McCoy, Wis., evaluates during a culminating event on Jan. 11 at the 2-196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) in Sioux Falls.



From left, Army National Guard Soldiers Spc. Darrel Roberts, 211th Engineer Company, Sgt. First Class Richard Dostal, 2-196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), and Spc. Ariel Delgado, 153rd Engineer Battalion, stabilize Spc. Marcus Howard, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, while putting him on a long-spine board during training at the 2-196th Regiment (RTI) in Sioux Falls.

Soldiers were validated on both their EMT and combat medic skills in a practical setting. Students were given several scenarios throughout the course, depending on the block of instruction, and then received hands-on testing to better understand what was taught.

"The skills these medics hold are invaluable to those around them and testing them practically is the best way to examine their knowledge in this environment," said Simpson, who has been teaching the course for several years. "Oxygen therapy, intravenous infusion (IV therapy) and patient assessments are some of the EMT skills that are validated."

"As a combat medic and an EMT with all these skills, I never know when I am going to need to use them. There is large range of injuries that a medic will see if deployed to Afghanistan and even here in the U.S.," said Pfc. Elizabeth Bales, a student in the class. "You never know what you are going to come upon, so it is good to have a large range of skills that you know how to perform to keep a patient alive and to keep yourself safe while executing these duties."

**"We try to make the training more realistic and perform the skills that are most pertinent to the war in Afghanistan."
— Aaron Simpson —**

Each medic was also tested during a culminating event called a Table 8. The event tests the skills they have been training on throughout the course. Soldiers wear their combat equipment and treat the casualties given different scenarios at full-combat speed to simulate treating a casualty under fire.

"We try to make the training more realistic and perform the skills that are most pertinent to the war in Afghanistan," said Simpson. "The things we focus on the most during this course are hemorrhaging from an extremity, airway complications and tension pneumothorax (collapsed lung), which are the three most preventable causes of death on the battlefield today."

Bales, a combat medic with the 155th Engineer Company, hopes to use these skills in the near future.



South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier Spc. Darrell Roberts, 211th Engineer Company, assesses classmate Spc. Pence Upchurch, also of the 211th, during a practical exercise on Jan. 9 at the 2-196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) in Sioux Falls. Twenty-four students took part in the 48-hour course to refresh both their combat medic and Emergency Medical Technician skills.



South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier Staff Sgt. Jenna Watkins, right, Medical Command, prepares to execute a needle chest decompression on a simulated casualty during the culminating Table 8 event, while Aaron Simpson, left, instructor and contractor from the Regional Training Site Medical out of Fort McCoy, Wis., validates that she is conducting the proper procedure on Jan. 11 at the 2-196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) in Sioux Falls.

"I am planning on going to college to be in the medical field soon, so it will be good to have a firm background of all of the EMT skills and the skills we learn as combat medics in the National Guard," said Bales, a 19-year-old resident of Piedmont. "Just the basic knowledge that I have will help be the foundation of what I will learn in the future in college."

As the only combat medic in her unit, Bales added that she really enjoyed meeting other medics who work throughout the state, and to share individual experiences of those who have and have not deployed and how they have used these skills.



Photo by Maj. Kathleen Dirk

Lt. Col. Larry Debuhr, medical administrative officer with the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Medical Group, conducts combat medical training with Soldiers from Suriname's armed forces, in Paramaribo, Suriname, Nov. 24. The National Guard Bureau established South Dakota's partnership with Suriname in 2006 to develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the two entities.

Combat lifesavers train with Suriname forces

Story by 2nd Lt. Chad Carlson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

PARAMARIBO, Suriname – The South Dakota National Guard sent three service members to South America on a medical training exchange with service members from South Dakota's partner nation, Suriname, Nov. 23-25.

Lt. Col. Larry Debuhr, medical administrative officer with the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Medical Group and South Dakota Army National Guard's Sgt. 1st Class Kelley Crane, combat lifesaver and emergency medical technician, and Staff Sgt. Justin Schiferl, Medical Command readiness noncommissioned officer, conducted combat medical training in Paramaribo with Suriname medics and Soldiers.

South Dakota's service members focused their training on advanced life support, which included self-aid and buddy care, wound care,



Photo by Maj. Kathleen Dirk

South Dakota Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Kelley Crane, combat lifesaver and emergency medical technician, conducts combat medical training with soldiers from Suriname's armed forces, in Paramaribo, Suriname, Nov. 24. The National Guard Bureau established South Dakota's partnership with Suriname in 2006 to develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the two entities.

splinting, shock, airway management, IV application and transport.

"It helped raise awareness of what types of medical treatments are available and potentially introduced them to new first aid techniques," Debuhr said.

Suriname's medical personnel trained National Guard members on treatment using limited and natural resources, which included 'bush' medical training and techniques used in the jungle environments throughout Suriname.

"You have to adapt to your surroundings and make the best of what you have to work with," Debuhr said. "They do what they can and work with what they have to make things happen."

"It forced us to step out of our comfort zone and experience different things," Crane said. "Our procedures are more advanced, only because we have access to more training and equipment. Even though it's more difficult for Suriname to get the equipment, it seems as though they excel at survival-type training."

The exchange also emphasized the importance of training on a wide spectrum of topics to include medical maladies that are no longer a concern in the U.S.

"There are many things that are medical concerns in other countries that have been eliminated in the U.S.," said Schiferl.



Photo by Maj. Kathleen Dirk

South Dakota Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Justin Schiferl, Medical Command readiness noncommissioned officer, conducts combat medical training with soldiers from Suriname's armed forces, in Paramaribo, Suriname, Nov. 24. The National Guard Bureau established South Dakota's partnership with Suriname in 2006 to develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the two entities.

"These items could easily be overlooked or misdiagnosed if they are not considered. By participating in this mission, I was reminded of the importance of a wide scope of operations."

Guard members concluded the exchange by traveling four hours west, to Nickerie, Suriname, where they worked with their

counterparts providing medical oversight during National Day ceremonies.

"We were very well received and feel that our work was appreciated," said Debuhr. "We take for granted in this country too many of the simple amenities. We should be thankful for what we have."



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Hero2Hired connects employers with veterans

Story by 2nd Lt. Chad Carlson

SDNG Public Affairs Office

Gov. Dennis Daugaard declared November as “Hire Veterans First” month and issued a proclamation asking South Dakota businesses and government agencies to hire veterans.

“I encourage South Dakota business leaders, public officials, and the leaders of civic and fraternal organizations that have employment opportunities to hire veterans for those positions,” said Gov. Daugaard, in a S.D. Department of Labor and Regulation press release. “Veterans make excellent employees.”

One Department of Defense program seeks to make that connection between employers and veterans.

Hero2Hired (H2H) is a website designed to make it easy for veterans of all military branches, as well as National Guard and Reserve service members to connect to and find jobs with military-friendly companies. The program is also available to the veteran or service member’s spouse.

H2H also offers career exploration tools, military-to-civilian skills translations, education and training resources, as well as a mobile app. Support for H2H is provided through the Department of Defense’s Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

“In addition to searchable job postings of military-friendly employers all over the country, H2H provides many other valuable tools to find a job, all in one place,” said Dan Popowski, Hero2Hired employment transition coordinator for South Dakota. “H2H is a one-stop shop for job seekers and employers. Not only is it free to both parties, but it offers an array of powerful tools.”

For the job seeker, H2H provides a search tool for jobs relevant to their military

occupation or skills, exploration of alternate career paths, a career assessment tool to link them to relevant careers, information about different industries, education and training resources, and the ability to join communities with similar interests and provide for networking opportunities.

For the employer, H2H provides free unlimited job postings, a forum to promote and market their company, provides direct access to qualified candidates who already have background checks and security clearances, which helps reduce recruiting and hiring costs. Employers can directly recruit individuals, receive automatic notifications of candidate applications, receive H2H messages and connection requests, as well as utilize a search function to match experience, education and skills to their job postings.

In addition to the online resources, H2H has employment transition coordinators

in every state and U.S. territory who are available to assist veterans and service members.

“We will assist with résumés, cover letters, interviewing and H2H-website navigation questions,” said Popowski. “We are career counselors who can give advice and provide helpful resources to those looking for assistance.”

Employment transition coordinators can set service members up on the H2H website to begin their personal marketing process, provide them with additional web and print resources, or sit down and work through the entire hiring process from initial résumé to the thank you letter after an interview.

Veterans or service members who are interested in using H2H services can do so by signing up online at www.H2H.jobs, or by calling Dan Popowski at (605) 357-2913, or e-mailing daniel.popowski@us.army.mil.



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YRRP: Is it really that important?

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Penny Dickes
Service Member & Family Support

The Yellow Ribbon Program is here to help you and your family meet the challenges of deployment. We have much to offer, and if you keep an open mind, you will have much to take away and valuable tools to use for years to come.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) is a DoD-wide effort to promote the well-being of all service members, their families and communities by connecting them with valuable information and access to resources throughout the deployment cycle. All units and individuals deployed for 90 consecutive days in a combat theater will participate in the reintegration events.

The YRRP consists of six events, one prior to, two during and three post mobilization. It is imperative to the program that unit integrity is maintained as much as possible during all phases of the deployment cycle. Unit integrity greatly helps individual Soldiers through the reintegration process by maintaining those connections to other people who have shared experiences in the combat theater.

The first event is held prior to a unit's mobilization. This event provides service members and their families information about the deployment process, as well as connecting them with resources that will help sustain them through the deployment. This event is held 30-45 days before a unit's

departure. This event provides information and resources pertaining to legal rights, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, TriWest benefits, dental benefits, Military OneSource, personal financial consultant, military pay, chaplain, military and family life consultant (MFLC), youth services, family assistance and family readiness.

The second and third events take place during the deployment, and are attended by family members. These events help ensure the families are receiving the support they need, and to help smooth the reunion process when their deployed service member returns.

The three remaining events take place 30, 60 and 90 days following the service members' return from the combat theater. The 30- and 60-day events are attended by the service members and their families and provide assistance with the reunification process, benefits and resiliency. Resources and information available at this event include: VA Hospital enrollment, TriWest, chaplain, MFLC, S.D. Dept. of Veteran Affairs, PTSD, suicide prevention, substance abuse training, resilience skills and special guest speakers.

The last YRRP event is the post deployment health reassessment, attended by service members only. It is federally mandated and is designed to identify and address any health concerns, with specific emphasis on mental health. Yellow Ribbon - we're here for you! (and YES, it really is that important.)



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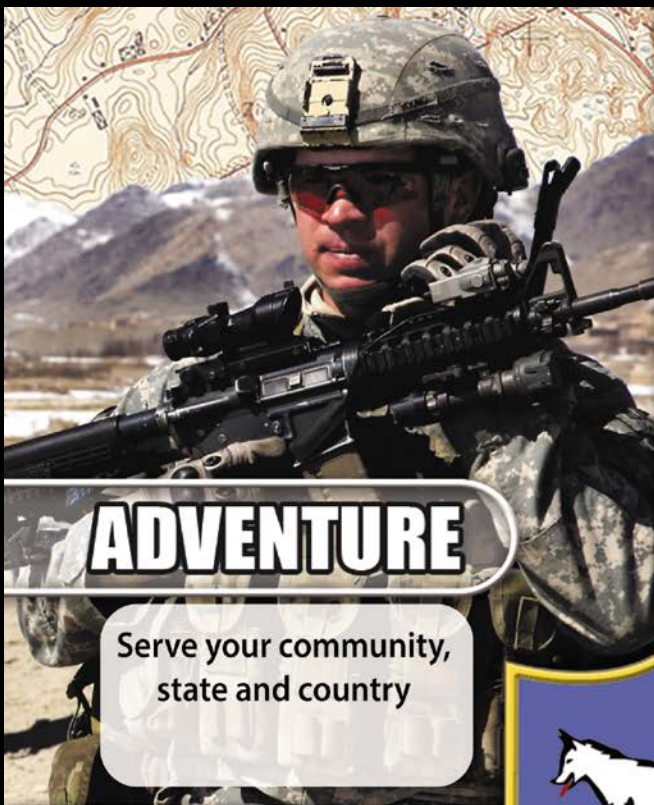
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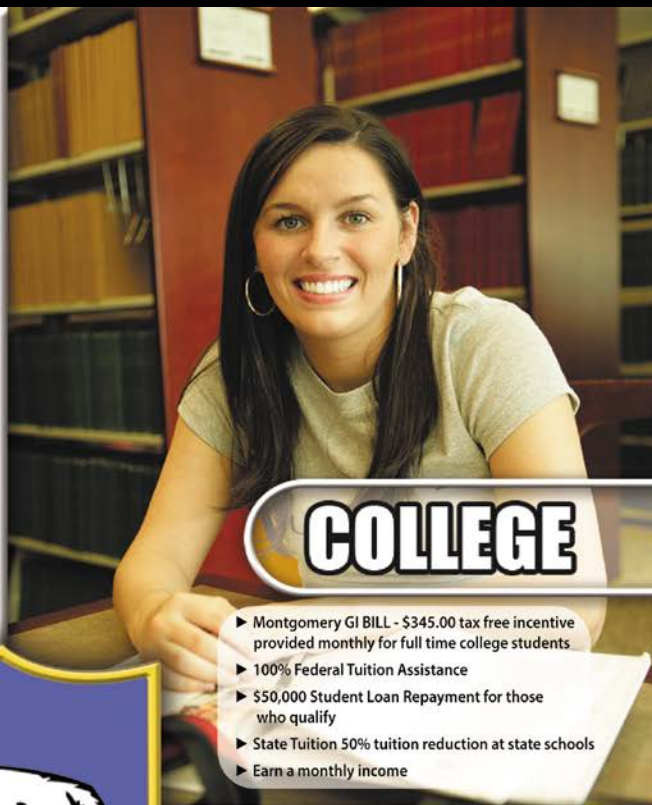
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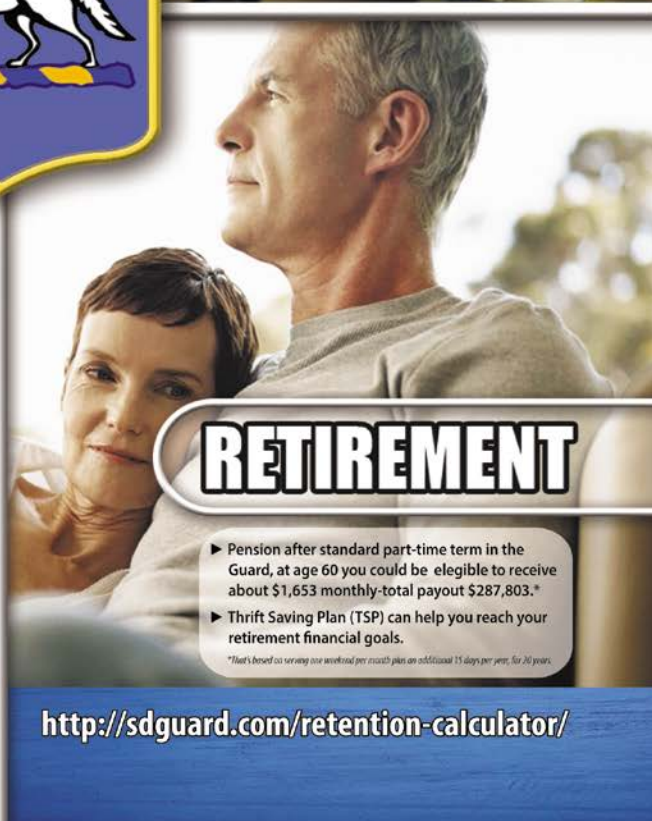
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